

***The Companions of the
Messenger Muhammad (saw)***

“Fear Allah, fear Allah, when dealing with my Companions.”

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Introduction

Islam is the perfect ideology because it was designed by Allah (swt), the Creator. The Islamic ideology is sent to all of humanity. Thus, it must be conveyed in a method that illustrates, and clarifies its nature, thus leaving no doubt in the minds of humanity that Islam is the correct ideology for them.

Therefore, it becomes an objective for all Muslims to carry and convey the Islamic ideology to all people. Conveying the Message of Islam means inviting humanity to Islam, culturing them with its concepts and rules, and removing any material obstacle that stands in the way of the Message through the employment of a force capable of doing so.

The Sahabah

Islam has a specific way of life derived from its concepts concerning life and that is the Islamic culture, which differs from all other cultures. It is characterised by three points: first, it is founded on the basis of the Islamic Aqeedah; second, the criterion of actions in life is based on Allah's commands and prohibitions, i.e. life is based on Halal and Haram; third, the meaning of happiness is to gain Allah's pleasure, i.e. permanent peace of mind cannot be achieved without first gaining Allah's pleasure. This is the Islamic way of life.

This was very clearly understood by the Sahabah (raa). They knew that they had upon their shoulders the responsibility of taking care of the affairs of the world. Allah (swt) gave them the lofty role of global security.

The Prophet (SAW) created a unique and incomparable generation in the history of Islam, nay, in the entire history of humanity. This group was created from a society in which the beliefs, values, emotions and laws were non-Islamic. The Prophet (SAW) and his Sahabah (raa) were able to challenge the Romans and the Persians, let alone the Quraysh.

Never before had this earth seen a more righteous and harmonious body of men. They were a unique generation formed and shaped by the Quran and the Messenger of Allah (SAW) himself. They placed no loyalty or love above their loyalty and devotion to Islam. Loyalties to family, friends and tribe were rendered subservient to the love of Allah (swt) and His Messenger (SAW).

Abdullah ibn Masud (ra) narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said:

"The best of my nation is the one with me now."

Abu Said al Khudri Narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said:

"Do not curse or rebuke my companions. By Allah if one of you would spend as much gold as would weigh the mountain of Uhud, he would not be rewarded equal to the one given to my companions where one of them just gave a handful of wheat." [Bukhari & Muslim]

Allah's Messenger (SAW) said:

"Allah! Allah! On my Companions do not direct controversy, whoever loved them, loved me, and whoever loathed them, loathed me, and whoever insults them, insults me, and whoever insults me insults Allah, and Allah may then punish them..." [Tirmidhi].

Abi Said al-Khudri reported that the Prophet (SAW) said:

"A time will come when group of people will initiate conquest against a city and they will be asked by the defenders of the city if they have amongst them any companions of the Prophet (SAW). They will say yes, and then the gates will be opened to them (repeated three times)."

The Prophet (SAW) said:

"Fear Allah, fear Allah, when dealing with my Companions."

The Prophet (SAW) said:

"Allah has favoured my Companions over everybody else other than the Prophets."

In the battle of Uhud, the Prophet (SAW), was hemmed from all sides by the enemy. He called out:

"Who will barter his life for me?" No sooner than did his followers hear the call that seven of the Ansars rushed to defend the Prophet and fought, man after man, and died like heroes." [Ibn Ishaq]

Their unique love for the Prophet (SAW) is apparent from the statement made by Urwa to his brethren Quraysh on his return from Hdaybiyah. He said,

"I have seen many monarchs. I have been in the courts of Caesar, Khusrau, and Negus. I can swear that I have not seen any King held in greater respect by his subjects than Muhammad is by his Companions..." [Zad-ul-Ma'ad]

On the battlefield of Uhud, the Prophet (SAW) dispatched Zaid bin Thabit to convey his greetings to Sa'ad bin Rabi' and inquire from him how he was feeling. Zaid made a long search among the killed and the wounded and then he came upon him just in the nick of time, for he was dying fast. He had received about seventy wounds. Zaid hastily communicated to him the Prophet's message. He replied,

"Pay my respect to the Prophet, and tell him that I am smelling the sweet smells of Paradise, and to my community of Ansar do say that if anything happened to the Prophet while even one of them lived, they would not escape the Divine wrath." Saying this he passed away. [Ibn Ishaq]

The sterling character and qualities of the Muslim soldiers were once praised by a Roman officer in these words:

“At night you will find them prayerful; during the day you will find them fasting. They keep their promise, order good deeds, suppress evil and maintain complete equality among themselves.” [Kitab-ul-Mujalasa]

Another testified thus:

“They are horsemen by day and ascetics by night. They pay for what they eat in territories under their occupation. They are the first to salute when they arrive at a place and are valiant fighters who just wipe out enemy.” [Ibn Kathir]

Who is the Sahabi?

There are two definitions of the Sahabi:

1. A Muslim who saw the Prophet (SAW)
2. A Muslim who lived with the Prophet (SAW) for one or two years or participated in one or two ghazwaat (military expeditions led by the Prophet (SAW)).

The latter definition was reported by Sa'ed bin Musayeb (ra) and is the stronger.

Linguistically a Sahabi is a companion and in Shari'ah terminology it means the person who accompanied the Messenger of Allah (SAW) for a lengthy period of time, mixed with him (SAW) and learned from him (SAW).

Imam al-Mazini said in his book Sharh ul-Burhan,

"We do not mean by Sahabah those who met him for a day or two, or those who attended him for some business and then left, we mean those who followed him, helped him and were guided by the light that Allah (swt) revealed to him (SAW), those are the ones to attain felicity."

Imam Ibn Hazm, in his book al-Ahkam, said,

"Not everybody who saw or talked with the Prophet (SAW) becomes a companion, otherwise Abu Jahl and other Mushriks will be considered companions as well."

The Authority of Ijma as Sahabah (The Consensus of the Companions)

The Sahabah (raa) were the group who had the best access to the revelation and were most mindful of holding fast to the revelation in their actions. Their Ijma is a proof for the following two reasons:

First, Allah (swt) in the following Ayah praises them as a community, not just as individuals.

"The Vanguard (of Islam) - the first of those who forsook (their homes) and those who gave them aid (the Muhajireen and the Ansar) and also those who follow them in good deeds, Allah is well pleased with them and they with Allah. And Allah has made ready with them gardens underneath which rivers flow and that will be their abode forever eternally, this is the supreme triumph."

[At -Taubah 9: 100]

This compliment is given to the Sahabah (Muhajireen & Ansar) for the sole reason of having been the Sahabah (raa). However, the compliment for others is due to the fact that they followed the footsteps of the Sahabah (raa). This means that the original compliment is for the Sahabah (raa). The followers are not complimented but for following the Sahabah (raa). Therefore, it can be concluded that the meaning of the Ayah is confined to the Sahabah (raa) only. Any group of people whom Allah (swt) complements in such a manner, the truthfulness of what they agree on is affirmed.

Second, doubt in their trust-worthiness leads to doubt in Islam. The Sahabah (raa) were the generation that transmitted the Quran and narrated the Ahadith. Our entire Deen has been conveyed to us through the vehicle of this group. This group was the means by which Allah (swt) chose the Quran to be compiled and preserved. Allah (swt) has promised to preserve this scripture through them. Allah (swt) say's:

"Falsehood cannot come at it (Qur'an) from before it or from behind it. It is a revelation from the Wise, the Owner of Praise."

[Fussilat: 42]

The important point to remember is that Ijma as Sahabah is not the personal opinions of the Sahabah (raa) on any technical issue. Rather, it is their agreement on specific things with regard to its rule in Islam, an i.e. agreement on a Sharii issue.

The Sahabah (raa) would not agree that a certain thing is Islamically permitted or forbidden without knowing whether that action was approved or disapproved by the Prophet (SAW). However, the Hadith in this regard is not narrated to us, instead its rule is conveyed by the total agreement of the Sahabah (raa). The Ulema are in agreement that Ijma as Sahabah is a binding proof.

Their Only Source of Guidance

The Companions lived at a time when guidance was available from other civilisations. Indeed, there was the Roman culture, its civilisations, its books and its laws, its vast system of government, which even today are considered to be the foundation of European culture. There was the heritage of Greek culture - its logic, its philosophy and its art, which are still a source for inspiration for Western thought. There was the Persian civilisation, its arts, its poetry and its legends, and its religion and system

of government. Not to mention, the Jews and Christians were settled in the heart of Arabia. There were many other civilisations, near and far, such as the Indian and Chinese cultures, and so on. But, in spite of all this, the Prophet (SAW) trained the Sahabah (raa) from the Qur'an. His (SAW) intention was that this group should dedicate itself purely to the Book of Allah and arrange its lives solely according to its teachings. This is why the Prophet (SAW) was angry at 'Umar (ra) when he found him reading the Torah - a source different from the Qur'an.

It is related that Umar ibn al-Khattab brought to Allah's Messenger (SAW) a copy of the Torah and said:

"Allah's Messenger, this is a copy of the Torah." He (Allah's Messenger) kept quiet and he (Umar) began to read it. The (colour) of the face of Allah's Messenger (SAW) underwent a change, whereupon Abu Bakr said: "Would that your mother mourn you, don't you see the face of Allah's Messenger?" Umar saw the face of Allah's Messenger (SAW) and said: "I seek refuge with Allah from the wrath of Allah and the wrath of His Messenger. We are well pleased with Allah as Lord, with Islam as religion, and with Muhammad as Prophet."

Whereupon Allah's Messenger (SAW) said: "By Him in Whose hand is the life of Muhammad, even if Moses were to appear before you and you were to follow him, leaving me aside, you would certainly stray into error; for if (Moses) were alive (now), and he found me, he would have definitely followed me." [Mishkat Al-Masabih]

Their Method of Learning

The Sahabah (raa) did not approach Qur'an for the purpose of acquiring culture and information, nor for the purpose of taste and enjoyment. They

(raa) did not approach the Quran to increase knowledge or to solve some scientific or legal problem.

Instead, they (raa) turned to the Qur'an to find out what the Almighty Creator had prescribed for them and for their lives. This understanding - the understanding that instruction is for action - realised for them a direction for life. Moreover, Qur'an became part of their personalities, mingling with their lives and characters so that they became living examples of the faith - a faith not hidden in intellects or books, but expressing itself in a dynamic movement which changed conditions and events and the course of life.

Their Bond

Islam based the Islamic society on the association of Aqeedah alone, instead of the low associations based on race and colour, language and country, regional and national interests. There was no tribal partisanship among them. the pride of lineage was ended, the voice of nationalism was silenced, and the Messenger of Allah Addressed them:

"Get rid of this partisanship; these are foul things", and "He is not one of us who calls towards partisanship, who fights for partisanship, and who dies for partisanship."

Thus this partisanship - the partisanship of lineage - ended; and this slogan - the slogan of race - died; and this pride - the pride of nationality - vanished. In this generation there were Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Ali, 'Uthman, Talha and Zubayr belonging to the Quraysh of Mecca; Abu Dharr and Anas came from the Ghifari tribe living in Tahamah near Mecca; Abu Hurairah and Abu Tufail b. Amr from Yemen and belonging to the tribe of Aws; Abu Musa al-Ashari and Muadh b. Jabal from another tribe in

Yemen; Dammad b. Th'alba came from the tribe of Azd; Bilal from Abyssinia; Suhayb from Rome; Salman from Persia etc.

Their Contribution

The generation produced a band of men like Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali, Mu'awiyah whose rule threw into shade the greatest kingdoms of all times and their rules of justice eclipsed the Roman and Persian legal systems.

The generation produced great generals like Khalid b. Walid and Abu Ubayda b. Jarrah liberating the land of Sham from Byzantines, S'ad b. Abi Waqqas liberating the land of Iraq and Iran, 'Amr b. Abi al-As who overthrew the grandest empires of the west and east in few years. It is reported on the authority of Anas ibn Malik that Allah's Messenger (SAW) said,

"Every nation has an extremely trustworthy man, and the trustworthy man of this (i.e. Muslim) nation (Ummah) is Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah."
[Bukhari]

The Secret behind the Strength of Rasoul Allah's (saw) Companions

What is the secret behind the strength of Rasoul Allah (saw)'s family and companions? They used to love Allah (swt) and his Messenger Muhammad (saw) but what was the thing which made them leave their homelands and sacrifice everything to please Allah (swt) and for which He (swt) promised many of them paradise during their lifetimes? How did they continue to struggle even when they lost their wealth, health and families in the cause of Allah (swt) and his Rasoul? What should we do when we are weak and fall down in the struggle or stray from the right path because, for example, we stop thinking about pleasing Allah (swt) and instead begin to think more about pleasing ourselves or other people? What should we do if we find ourselves wounded, without resources and find ourselves without power or tangible success? At that time we will obviously need strength and firmness to continue with the struggle, where will this strength come from?

We should first appreciate that Allah (swt) is closer to us than our mothers and fathers, whom we love, since he is the one who gives life to the dead seed and feeds and looks after us in our mothers womb. He is also the one who, when you die and are no more than dust, will give you life and raise you up again in the hereafter. And He (swt) is the one who sent the Messenger Muhammad (saw) to us as a mercy and has promised to us eternal bliss if we obey his commands and refrain from what he has forbidden. Hence Abu Bakr Siddique (ra) said to his father: *"By Allah, the Messenger Muhammad (saw) is related to me more than you"*. Allah (swt) has

not left us without guidance in any part of our life and he (swt) says in the Qur'an concerning this:

“Say if your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your friends... or your businesses, and properties are more important to you then Allah (swt) and his Messenger or struggling in his cause then wait until Allah brings about his decision [i.e. they are not equal and will not balance on the day of judgment].” [EMQ 9:24]

The Sahabah were even prepared to die or to be attacked for the sake of Allah (swt) and his Rasoul because they understood the priority and that this carried immense reward for them. The Messenger Muhammad (saw) would say during the struggle: *“Whoever swears at us it is Sadaqah for us”* It is narrated that Abu Bakr Siddique used therefore to smile in the face of those who swore at him from the Quraish and the cases of Amr Bin Yasir, Shuaib are among many others who were tortured and even killed for the sake of Allah (swt). And when the Messenger Muhammad (saw) cried over the attacks that he (saw) and his followers suffered in their daw'ah Allah (saw) said to him: *“...if people address you they are not targeting YOU but US (i.e. my deen and message)”* Therefore don't worry because its not a question of YOUR dignity or honour rather the MESSAGE YOU CARRY so continue to carry it despite the attacks. And Allah (swt) says:

“...and you are not the first one to be attacked, there were many messengers before who were sent and attacked but we gave them victory in the end...”

Thus, similarly, just as the companions were not the first followers to be attacked, we are not the first Da'ees to be attacked.

Moreover when Ali (ra) said to Rasoul Allah (saw),

"They are attacking Fatimah and you." He (saw) replied: "...Whoever curses someone and he didn't deserve it the curse will return to them." Then he (saw) asked Ali (ra): "Are you targeting to be known among the people or to please Allah (swt)?" Ali (ra) replied, "To please Allah (swt)". To which Rasoul Allah (saw) said: "So don't worry about the attack".

In addition we must remember that Allah (swt) has entrusted us with Islam in order to carry it to the world and to make it dominant. So it is an Amanah or trust in our hands. Allah (swt) says concerning this:

"Among the believers are certain people who fulfil their promise and allegiance to Allah, some have passed away and some remain steadfast"

Hence we must continue to struggle and ensure that despite any attack against us personally this Amanah does not suffer whether it be our persons or our wealth which are targeted. Further we must remain calm and not swear or abuse our attackers since the Prophet (saw) said:

"The Muslim is not the one who swears, who curses or who abuses..."

and,

"He is not one of us who uses sexual words."

The Messenger Muhammad (saw) even went as far as to say

"Do not swear at the rock, the tree or at the birds..."

and,

"The Muslim is the one whose mouth mentions Allah and His Messenger".

We must therefore interact so that our Islamic personality becomes an example or model for others to follow i.e. to change them. Not people defending their OWN name or personality from attack or adopting other people's personalities. Our weapons in the battlefield must be ONLY the Qur'an and the Sunnah of Rasoul Allah (saw).

Finally, in order To strengthen our Islamic Personalities we must: Firstly ensure our Imaan is firm, that we are aware about the commands and prohibitions of Allah (swt) i.e. we should always be seeking knowledge about Islam for Allah (swt) says:

"Those that fear Allah among the believers are those who have knowledge."

Secondly we must implement that knowledge ensuring that we do that which we call others to do but not stopping even if we find some weakness in ourselves since Rasoul Allah (saw) said:

"You must command good even if you don't do it and forbid evil even if you do it."

Thirdly we must ensure we do all our actions out of sincerity only for the pleasure of Allah (swt) and not for any other reason.

Fourthly we need to understand the reality in which we live and the situation of those who do not abide by the commands of Allah (swt) so that we may recognize their diseases and not catch them as well such as secularism, nationalism and defeatism. In areas of permissibility we must be like the bird that picks what is best, for Allah (swt) says:

"I want you to follow the best thing revealed to you by Allah"

We must look at the habits and customs of the people and examine whether they do them because they are allowed or because of habit. We should make sure that our personality is a unique one based only on the divine text and not on copying someone else's personality. We must remember that we are Muslims first, foremost and last.